Executive Team minutes

26 January 2023

Details of attendees are provided at the end of the minutes.

1.   Introductions and apologies

1.1.   Apologies for absence were received from John Edwards.

2.   Declarations of interests

2.1.   No declarations of interests were made.

3.   ICO 25 Target Operating Model (TOM)

3.1.   Jonathan Noble, Ed Gurney and Jenny Woolcock of Human Engine attended the meeting to present a report setting out the proposed TOM. Human Engine emphasised the excellent engagement with the consultation from staff across the entire organisation.

TOM overall proposals

3.2.   ET review agreed that the TOM matched the ambition of the shifts of approach and would make the ICO well-placed to achieve the ambition of ICO 25.

3.3.   ET considered how to ensure a clear distinction between and understanding of PACE teams, projects and business-as-usual activities, and confirmed that PACE teams would be used for regulatory and non-regulatory activities. ET also discussed whether there may be instances of successful PACE teams being re-formed for new work.

3.4.   ET also noted the importance of strong delivery of the professions workstream, as this was vital in giving staff a clear understanding of the purpose and skills of roles across the organisation, enabling work across directorate structures. This was particularly important in the context of PACE teams, but would also have relevance to projects and BAU as these also included large cross-office elements.

Prioritisation

3.5.   Human Engine provided an overview of the prioritisation principles used to develop the TOM delivery plan. ET discussed these principles and their application and agreed that the prioritisation

approach was appropriate at a high level, but the scale of work appeared to be too great to be deliverable. ET particularly noted the completion of the cultural shift in nine months as particularly ambitious, and the need for a lot of training and development to assist staff in this. ET also highlighted that there was significant uncertainty for the projects reliant on legislative reform, as these would be pending DPDI's passage through Parliament.

3.6. ET agreed that it was vital to review the projects to ensure that the portfolio was deliverable within the scope of ICO 25. ET also noted that ICO was effectively the first large step in ongoing organisational transformation and many of the projects that delivered longer-term change, especially cultural change, would by their nature persist and continue beyond the current ICO 25 timeline.

Delivery

3.7. ET discussed the existing strengths in place to support delivery of the TOM and weaknesses which needed to be addressed in order to deliver. ET highlighted staff as the key strength, particularly the attitude of collaboration, teamwork and problem-solving approaches across the whole organisation.

3.8. ET highlighted understanding of project management principles across the organisation as an area for improvement. ET also commented that organisationally there was not always sufficient focus on ensuring clarity of the purpose or definition of done of work, particularly the longer work progressed. ET also highlighted the importance of becoming better at making decisions and taking action to stop work when this became appropriate.

3.9. ET particularly discussed the capacity challenges in key areas, particularly in regulatory, legal, research and digital/technology. ET agreed that there were clearly capacity challenges in key areas, but there are was anecdotal information of staff having spare capacity, particularly in the context of staff feeling that they were waiting for decisions on ICO 25 before work progressed. ET discussed whether there would be opportunities to enable the enthusiasm and problem-solving approach of staff to deliver cross-training to address capacity challenges in key areas in the medium- and long-term.

3.10. ET also discussed the potential known risk factors which could create delivery problems for ICO 25, especially highlighting the

timetable, outcomes and implementation of legislative reform, the ongoing economic outlook, retention and recruitment challenges, and change fatigue/resilience.

3.11. ET discussed what actions they could personally take immediately to begin delivering the TOM, both as individually ET members and as the collective Executive Team. ET agreed that they would reviewing their ET own purpose statement, behaviours, accountabilities and collective leadership approach to ensure that it remained fully aligned to delivering the TOM. ET also identified the need to ensure that they took steps to maximise the effectiveness of collective ET discussions, emphasised the importance of cross-office working at all levels, and commented that they would need to constantly and consistently prioritise resources towards key objectives.

Decision

3.12. ET supported the proposed TOM, subject to the amendments discussed at the meeting.

4. Draft High Performance Strategy

4.1. Paul Arnold presented a report setting out the draft High Performance Strategy for review and comment, prior to this being considered by People Committee and Management Board. He also thanked ET members for their comments on the blog, which had been published earlier in the day morning.

4.2. Rob Holtom and Chris Braithwaite provided an overview of the feedback from SLT when they had received the strategy earlier in the week, which had been broadly positive.

4.3. ET discussed the importance of impact measures, and also clear ways of demonstrating how the strategy would deliver continued efficiency. ET also discussed the importance of ensuring that strategy supported and empowered staff to deliver high performance, but also identified the importance of clear and consistent expectations about standards and behaviours, at all levels. Future blogs would help to support this, but it would also need buy it at all levels of the organisation.

4.4. ET reflected on the power of analogies, particularly of sport teams, in showing different types and approaches to high performing teams and encouraged their continued use throughout the organisation.

5.   Any other business

Organisational Design – Phase 2

5.1.   Jen Green highlighted that she would arrange a further discussion for ET regarding proposals of Organisational Design – Phase 2 during the next week, ahead of consultation with staff on the proposals.

Attendance

Members

Paul Arnold (Chair)	Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer
Claudia Berg	General Counsel
Emily Keaney	Deputy Commissioner (Regulatory Policy)
Jen Green	Executive Director (Strategic Change and Transformation)
Rob Holtom	Executive Director (Data, Digital and Technology)
Stephen Bonner	Deputy Commissioner (Regulatory Supervision)

Attendees

Angela Balakrishnan	Director of Corporate Communications
Farhana Ahmed	Regulatory Staff Officer
Fiona Simkiss	Private Secretary to Jen Green
Izy Jude	Private Secretary to Stephen Bonner
John Kavanagh	Director of Governance Transition
Rebecca Bradbury	Private Secretary to Paul Arnold
Sarah Delahunty	Private Secretary to Emily Keaney
Ed Gurney	Human Engine (for item 3)
Jenny Woolcock	Human Engine (for item 3)
Jonathon Noble	Human Engine (for item 3)

Secretariat

Chris Braithwaite	Corporate Governance Manager